

The Jewish Community's Guide to Understanding Teens:

A Compilation of Research on Teen Trends, Tween Trends
and a Special Study on the Impact of BBYO on Alumni



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WHERE YOUNG LIVES
TAKE SHAPE



Jewish organizations serving teens have a unique opportunity to make a connection during the most formative years, as teens are on a quest for choice as they form their personal identity. It has become clear that teens finding a connection to Judaism during the teen years are more likely to stay connected as adults. As this report shows, the pervasiveness of technology, combined with academic pressures and the infinite range of extracurricular activities in preparation for college, increasingly compete for teens' attention virtually every hour of every day. While this presents an enormous challenge to organizations vying for the attention of the teen audience, understanding teens and speaking their language can help Jewish organizations create a lifelong Jewish connection.

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Throughout Report: *Teens Defined, Decoding Jewish Teens and BBYO Strategy to Reach Teens*

BBYO makes it our business to understand teens. We conduct ongoing research to keep our finger on the pulse of teen trends, so we'll know what teens want and can cater programs to those interests. In 2005, BBYO commissioned a survey by Teenage Research Unlimited (TRU), the leading researcher of teens, tweens and twenty-somethings, in order to better understand teen views on religion. BBYO has spent the last several years following teen trends and culling through teen research – both secular and Jewish. This updated report, a compilation of secondary resources, reflects our most recent findings. The report focuses on teenagers, while also providing information on “tween” trends to increase the understanding of this younger, pre-high school demographic.

Teens Defined: Tweens—a term, most often used by marketers, that combines the words *between* and *teen* to describe the pre-teen demographic; usually documented as ages 8–12, but sometimes extended to 14.

The original survey found that a significant majority of American teenagers across all U.S. regions places a surprisingly high value on the importance of religion in their life. Of these teens, an equally strong majority expresses a need to better connect to their religion of choice.

Specifically, more than two-thirds of teens—68 percent of respondents aged 13 to 18—say that religion and faith are important to them. And yet, of this cohort, a whopping 92 percent say they want a better connection to religion; 52 percent of them are seeking less conventional ways to connect; and 40 percent say that they find it difficult to connect to their religion.

Teens and tweens today desire less conventional ways to connect to religion which reflects the overarching trend of today's teens to create their own unique identities. Teenagers want to be empowered and in control of their activities and schedules; why would their religious lives be any different?

This report includes a broad look at today's American teen—their core interests, needs and habits. The major themes that will stand out include the themes of customization, empowerment, expression, privacy and stress.

By understanding teenagers and offering methods to empower them, Jewish organizations will be better equipped to capture their imagination and create program opportunities that will allow them to shape their own identities as they form meaningful connections. The findings in this compilation have had a profound impact on BBYO's strategies for reaching teens which have been responsible for the organization's doubling in size over the last six years. Throughout this document we will share with you some of the steps that have occurred during this journey.

A Generation (Loosely) Defined

Currently, there are 33 million teenagers throughout the United States and approximately 375,000 Jewish teens nationwide. Thirteen percent of the American Jewish population is between the ages of 10 and 19 (National Jewish Population Study).

This report includes a breakdown of the main trends of teens and tweens (specifically focusing on those born between 1990 and 1996), how these trends also apply to Jewish teens, and statistics that are unique to this tech-savvy demographic.

It is important to note that there are still varying opinions surrounding the labeling and boundaries of this demographic. Often lumped together with Generation Y (born roughly between 1980 and 1994 to Baby Boomer parents), today's teens and tweens have an experience and perspective that is distinct even from those born in the early to mid '80s. This new generation, most commonly referred to as Generation Z and born 1990–1995, has never known a world without the Internet or cell phones. Also called "The New Silent Generation," "iGeneration" and "NetGen," their lives are marked by such events as 9/11 and the Iraq War. However, there are still more authors who prefer to group these two generations together into the overarching title "Millennials," born between 1982–2000.

Regardless of generational titles, today's teens demonstrate a unique understanding of and interaction with the society and the world around them.

(Sources: The New Recruit by Sarah L. Sladek; "Children of the tech revolution" by Lucinda Schmidt and Peter Hawkins; William Strauss and Neil Howe)





Spotlight on Teen Trends

CUSTOMIZATION AND IDENTITY

- Today's teens can customize and personalize (otherwise known as "pimping" in teen-speak) every aspect of their lives, from their sneakers to their talking avatars.

Teens Defined: Avatar—a digital representation of oneself that can be an icon or picture.

- Customization is driven by a need to differentiate one's identity. Teens are the "Starbucks generation" and feel entitled to customization and choice as an expression of identity.
- Social networking sites show a more risk-taking version of a teen's personality, with more experimentation. They try something on electronically and then bring it to "the real world" if it works.
- Teens want to have choices as they form their identities. They do not necessarily want to stand out from the pack or be radically different from everyone else.

Decoding Jewish Teens: Over half of the 67 percent of teens who want to better connect to religion want an unconventional way to do so; the idea of DIY and customization seems to be leaking into religious life. Jewish teens are seeking customized ways to connect to their Judaism through special programming and unique experiences.

Decoding Jewish Teens: Though parents affect their children's beliefs, only 32 percent of Jewish teens think marrying a Jew is "extremely" or "very" important (compared with 60 percent of parents). Their departure from parental beliefs is an attempt to create their own identity.

BBYO Strategy: By offering a variety of leadership, community service, social justice programming and customizable summer experiences through the Passport to the World brand, teens can choose their own BBYO adventure.

(Sources: Rudman, TRU, 2005; Brandeis, 2000)

LIFE ON DEMAND: EMPOWERMENT/CONTROL

- Teens desire independence and control over their lives.
- Teens want to be in control of what they want and how they want it.
- Digital technology, such as cell phones and cameras, provides teens with instant gratification, e.g. snapping a picture and being able to see it immediately.
- Customization and DIY give teens the feeling of control over what they are buying or creating; they are producers, creators, distributors and consumers who actively participate in the world around them (sites such as YouTube allow teens to create, publish and view each other's videos).
- The traditional goals of driving and working an after-school job empower teens to make choices regarding their social life and money.

Teens Defined: YouTube—a free video-sharing website launched in 2005 where users can upload or watch user-created content.

(Source: TRU, 2005)

EXPRESS YOURSELF: VOICING THEIR BELIEFS

- Though teens under 18 can't vote, they desire to have their voices heard and to express personal opinions.
- Social networking "groups" and clothing can advertise what a teen believes, from their favorite musician to their favorite politician.
- Purchasing products whose proceeds go to causes (RED, LIVESTRONG bracelets, Ethos water) and celebrity causes give teens too young to vote a way to visually show others what they believe in; 53 percent of 14- to 34-year-old trendsetters bought a product that donated money to a cause.
- Beyond political or social concerns, new forms of media and television allow teens to vote online or via text message for their favorite singers, athletes and competitors for shows like American Idol. Teens live in a participatory culture in which expressing personal opinions in these areas gives them more control over what they experience.

Decoding Jewish Teens: Though data reported that Jewish teens "do not implement [social] values through Jewish philanthropy, volunteering at Jewish organizations," teens do voice their beliefs through material goods. This trend can be seen in some youth groups selling trendy clothes or jewelry that supports a cause.

BBYO Strategy: BBYO's award-winning website My2CentsforChange.org gave teens of all ages a chance to voice their opinions on topics at stake in the 2008 presidential election, ranging from war and genocide to hunger and homelessness.

(Sources: Trend School, 2006; Brandeis, 2000)

ON DISPLAY: PRIVACY REDEFINED

- Studies are now questioning teens' desire for privacy, due to the openness of Facebook and MySpace profiles; their lives and interests seem to be an open book.

Teens Defined: Facebook and MySpace—the two most popular social networking sites that allow users to create profiles and build an online community based around similar interests, geographic regions and causes.

- Teens have a conflicting understanding and false sense of privacy, believing that what they put online is in a safe, closed network separate from the authoritative sphere; they do not realize how permeable these networks can be.
- These profiles and avatars are perceived to be private from parents, teachers and authoritative adults who are not members of the site.
- Teens have the ability to control the settings of their profile, so they can determine who is able to view it, though not all teens take advantage of this function until they feel their privacy has been breached.
- Teens seem to desire privacy only from adults who have a direct effect on their lives, versus privacy from everyone as one would expect.



- Internet sites, such as Twitter and Facebook, show their “status” and give teens the power to tell their friends and others exactly what they are doing at any given moment (homework, laundry, what song they are listening to, etc.), as if they are creating their own “Big Brother.”

Teens Defined: Twitter—a free online service that allows users to send text-based updates via online messaging or cell phone texts to other users.

(Source: “Why are kids addicted to Facebook?” by Cindy Rich, Washingtonian, 2007)

FULL SPEED AHEAD: STRESS

- Teens still say they experience stress overload.
- Top concerns are good grades and getting into college.
- Between school, work, homework, social life, extracurriculars, technology and chores, teens are busy.
- Though many believe teens only live in the present, they report stressing over the “big picture” and “the future,” especially concerning finances related to current buying power and future wealth.
- Getting a college degree is now seen as necessary to being financially successful and happy in life.
- Activities and goals that used to be seen as optional, such as playing on athletic teams and going to college, are now stressful and deemed necessary.

Decoding Jewish Teens: Importance of grades—over the last three decades, grades have been higher for Jewish students compared to non-Jewish students. It is also reported that Jewish teenagers apply to more colleges. Jewish students reported stress, but “almost all” of those surveyed succeeded in meeting academic demands.

Decoding Jewish Teens: Studies show a decline in teen’s Jewish activities post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah; teens are overprogrammed and overworked. They may choose what is most important to them: Jewish life vs. school/social life/sports/jobs/TV and Internet.

(Sources: TRU, 2005; UCLA)



BBYO Strategy: BBYO helps teens navigate the college experience and career choices through campus visits and Project NYC, a 10-day experience for emerging entrepreneurs.

A Closer Look At...

TEENS AND TIME

Teens are busy! Between school, homework, after-school sports and jobs, teenagers have few hours in the day “free” to do what they please. In those few hours on a weekday, teens have to divide their time:

56% of teens spend their free time with friends

69% watch TV

42% watch a movie/DVD at home

78% surf the Internet

75% listen to music

37% play video games alone and 34% play with others

27% go shopping

39% choose to read

34% exercise

How are so many teens participating in so many free-time activities if they only have a couple of hours to spare? This generation of teenagers is renowned for the ability to multitask. A 15-year-old girl can be hanging out with friends, watching TV, talking on her cell phone and instant messaging online all at the same time. A 15-year-old boy can do the same, but would opt for playing video games with friends while listening to music and texting more friends on his cell phone. Teenagers today can combine any of the previously mentioned activities in order to fit everything in and not feel “bored.” They can even talk on their cell phones and text, at the same time!

(Source: TeensEyes, C&R Research, July 2008)



Teens are busy, so exactly how many hours per week do they allot to their free-time activities?

TV: 10.1

Listening to CDs, tapes, records, mp3: 8.8

Listening to radio: 7.9

Hanging out with friends: 8.1

Talking on their cell phone: 3.5

Talking on a land line: 5.1

Going online: 6.5

When asked if they have enough free time, almost half of teens responded that they feel they have “some,” while 30 percent reported “not that much.” Overall, girls feel more pressured for time than boys.

(Source: TRU 2004; TeensEyes 2008)

How do the previously referenced trends affect how teens spend their time?

Music: With music downloading programs, such as iTunes, teens do not have to buy an entire album but rather can get whatever tracks they want from multiple albums. These various songs create a playlist that is truly unique to them based on their customization skills.

Television: Tivo, DVR and On Demand give teens access to the TV shows they want to watch when they want to watch them. A teen can record an entire season of a show they want to watch and view it at their pace. Being able to fast-forward through commercials gives teens more control over the content, but makes marketing to teens even more difficult. Teens are also flocking to the Internet to catch the latest TV shows. With shorter commercials and the ability to watch hard-to-find shows (both legally and not), teens control their television consumption.

Teens Defined: DVR—a Digital Video Recorder records television content digitally, allowing users to watch live TV while also recording one or more programs. Users can also watch live TV and pause or rewind, automatically turning on the DVR device. TiVo is one of the first products that offered this type of technology.

Online: Teenagers are spending a large amount of their time online—chatting with friends, playing video games and surfing social networking sites, such as MySpace and Facebook. The networking sites allow teens to display customized profiles, showing as much personal information to others as they choose.

Online video games and instant messaging provide teens access to each other through cyberspace. Games, such as “The Sims” and “Second Life”, allow for DIY skills in the game—building people, houses, wardrobes, and even the physical appearance of the player’s character.

Teens Defined: “Second Life”—an Internet-based virtual world where players can interact with other users around the world. 3D avatars are used to represent users, and “residents” can customize their appearance before venturing out into a world complete with entertainment, jobs and money. “The Sims” is a computer game that allows users to similarly create people, houses, neighborhoods and cities where they control everyday life.

More and more teens are tuning in to blogging and online journals. These forms of online writing act as outlets for free speech and expression for teens who otherwise might not voice their opinions on a variety of issues, from politics to fashion, music to the environment.

Teens Defined: Blogs and Vlogs—a type of online journal where the “blogger” can write about anything from politics to gossip to his or her personal life. A vlog is a blog that is video-based.

(Source: TRU, 2005)

TEENS AND SPENDING

Between weekly allowance, gifts and after-school jobs, teens today have more spending power than previous

generations. Since most are not paying for necessities, such as housing, education and meals, teenagers choose to purchase various products they have dubbed “trendy” and worthy of their hard-earned cash.

- In 2003, teens spent over \$175 billion on themselves.
- Girls spend an average of \$94 a week, while boys spend \$88 a week.
- More than one-third of teens have jobs, yet most of their income comes from their parents.

What’s hot?

- Clothes are still hot, but teen priorities are shifting, causing a 16.7 percent decrease in apparel purchases between 2003 and 2004. The most popular stores for teen spending are Target, Abercrombie & Fitch, Forever 21 and Hollister. Teens customize their wardrobes by mixing high-end and lower-end labels to create unique identities.
- Teens crave the latest gadgets, such as computers, DVDs, video games, cell phones, digital cameras, and MP3 players.

TEENS AND A DIVERSE WORLD

Teenagers live “On Demand”: they know what they want and when they want it. Today’s teens’ idea of diversity illustrates a break from the racial or ethnic definition of diversity of the past. They define diversity by having options. They desire racial, ethnic and religious diversity, as well as economic diversity and a choice of movies, music, games, etc. They are not 100 percent loyal to specific television networks, brands or music. Though they have favorites, teenagers are open to pairing their favorite brand shirt with a cheaper pair of shorts, and they can download one pop song from the Billboard charts while also listening to their favorite R&B album. The openness of the teenage world demonstrates teens’ ability to accept diversity in their lives.

The technologies teens are using allow them to explore diversity by communicating with local friends, as well as people around the globe. The use of online games and social networking sites gives teenagers the ability to meet and keep in touch with people from different countries and cultural backgrounds. In the eyes of today’s teens, the world is flat, and they expect global interaction.

(Sources: TRU, 2005; “For teens, it’s all about technology” by David Ho, New York Times, 2008)

TEENS AND SERVICE/ADVOCACY

Many high schools require community service to graduate, but many teens are independently interested and actively involved in giving back to their communities. Environmental advocacy, preventing war and genocide, and increases in certain epidemics are at the forefront of today's teens' concerns. Many teens are giving back to specific causes through their spending power.

- At least 58 percent of 14- to 34-year-old trendsetters are actively participating in community service activities. And, 53 percent bought a product that donated money to a cause; items such as Lance Armstrong's LIVESTRONG wristbands, (Product) RED, Pink breast cancer awareness products, and Tide t-shirts for Katrina relief are considered trendy.
- 69 percent of young people believe that corporations and businesses can make a bigger impact in the world than politicians.
- Teens are joining "groups" on social networking sites that claim to donate money if groups reach a certain membership number; they are also adding "applications" to their profiles that claim to "reduce CO₂ emissions" or "save square feet of the rainforest."

(Source: Trend School!, 2006)

BBYO Strategy: BBYO offers teens a chance to participate in the world around them by giving them opportunities to attend Darfur rallies and AIPAC conferences.

TEENS AND TECHNOLOGY

As mentioned before, teens spend much of their free time plugged into TV, computers, cell phones, music and gaming systems. Even schoolwork is conducted on the Internet instead of at a library. Why is all of this media so attractive to teens?

The answer: The technology itself is not that out of the ordinary. For today's teens, technology is as commonplace as a knife and fork. Teens are not necessarily spending their money and time on electronics because they are "cool" but because that is just how they live.

Teens Defined: Digital Natives—people who have grown up with the digital technology that surrounds us, such as cell phones and digital cameras.

Technology is adapted and used as a practical tool. If a teen needs to get in touch with a parent, but is sitting in a movie theater, texting is the easiest way to touch base without having to disrupt the activity at hand. The technology does not hinder their lives or social skills; rather it boosts their ability to be constantly socializing. Teens are still using e-mail to communicate; however, it is no longer the main or most popular choice for contact and communication. Online instant messages are the more popular choice because they provide teens the ability to hold a conversation in real time.

Teen Tech Stats

- 84% have a desktop computer
- 51% have a laptop
- 84% have cell phones
- 84% utilize text messaging
- 74% have a game console
- 59% have a handheld gaming device
- 89% have DVD players
- 77% have digital cameras or camcorders
- 56% have digital music players
- 42% have digital music and video players
- 70% use Instant Messenger (IM) to stay in touch
- 41% use e-mail and IM to contact teachers and schoolmates about classwork
- 81% use e-mail to stay in touch with friends/relatives
- 56% prefer the Internet to the phone



The average teen generates between 50 and 70 cell phone text messages a day—roughly 1,500 each month. The average adult generates about 200 text messages per month.

Less than 10 years ago, the teen who sat in his or her room for hours playing video games was often considered a “loner”; today, that same teen is “social” networking or “social” gaming. For example, teens spend hours on multiplayer online games, such as “Second Life” where they are “hanging out” in cyberspace with familiar friends and making new ones who they may never meet in person.

Teens Defined: MMORPG—Massive Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game is a genre of online games, such as “World of Warcraft” or “Second Life” where players can log on around the world and interact with each other in real time within the game.

The technological communication tools teens use reflect their desire for empowerment and control. Today’s teens are available and wired 24/7; they expect instant gratification.

(Sources: Mediaweek; “Born to be Wired,” 2003; TRU, 2005, TeensEyes 2008)

TEENS AND THE BIGGER PICTURE

Teens are often stereotyped as having a self-centered, “how does this affect me?” attitude, while also being obsessed with the present. Yet, recent statistics show that today’s teens care more about what is going on around them and their futures than they are given credit for.

While today’s teens are focused on their friends and having fun, they are overwhelmed by thoughts of the “bigger picture.” The trend of teens becoming active in social causes is partly due to their concerns about the world they will live in as adults and partly due to the pressure to succeed through charitable involvement.



Teenagers feel a lot of stress and pressure concerning their future:

- When asked what makes them feel pressure, teens’ first two responses were “getting good grades” and “getting into a good college”; even 12- to 13-year-old “tweens” share these concerns.
- College is not a choice but a logical next step, and teens face even more pressure about where they will go to college.
- 88 percent of teens respond that financial security is a life expectation.
- Teens have diminished faith in media, government and law enforcement.
- Teens are occupied with thinking about their future happiness; the majority believe they will marry before 30, have a family, and have a successful career.

With all of these thoughts directed at the future, it is no wonder teens are so stressed. Teens often turn to technology as a way to escape the pressures of school; their free time is spent socializing or living in a cyberworld where real-life concerns do not exist. On sites such as Facebook and MySpace and in games, such as “Second Life,” teens can create new identities to escape the pressures of everyday life.

Decoding Jewish Teens: Teens face the same pressures and stressors as all other American teens. However, statistics show that there are a few differences when it comes to school.

- Jewish students spend more time studying, talking to teachers and getting involved in student groups and clubs.
- Jewish teens apply to more colleges:
 - 60 percent of Jewish teens apply to five or more colleges, while only 30 percent of non-Jewish teens apply to five or more
 - 25 percent of Jewish teens apply to eight or more colleges in comparison to 6.4 percent of non-Jews
 - More than 70 percent of Jewish teens plan to attend an elite university

(Sources: TRU, 2005; Trend School!, 2006; UCLA; Brandeis, 2000)



TEENS AND RELIGION

In a BBYO–commissioned TRU survey, teens across the country answered questions regarding their personal religious beliefs and practices.

- 67 percent of teens said they would like to better connect with their religion, yet 48 percent of those claimed they did not know how. 55 percent said they wanted a less conventional way to connect.
- 58 percent of teens who responded that religion is not important to them also indicated that they find it difficult to connect with their religion, and 55 percent said they are unsure of how to better connect to their faith.
- 15 percent consider themselves alienated from organized religion, and 15 percent are completely uninterested.
- 67 percent report that their beliefs are very similar to those of their parents.
- Adolescent girls are more likely to be interested than boys.

According to the Brandeis National Study of Youth and Religion, Jewish teens have a complex relationship with their religion.

- Three-quarters of teens care seriously about searching for meaning in their lives, yet only 40 percent seek that meaning through Judaism.
- Jewish teens claim a deep commitment to peoplehood, survival and ethics but do not implement these values through Jewish philanthropy, volunteering for Jewish organizations or observance of Jewish law.
- Nearly all Jewish teens surveyed participated in some sort of Jewish educational, volunteer or recreational activity in 7th grade, yet just over half did so in 12th grade.

Although the Brandeis data is from 2000, we do know that Jewish teens, like all American teens, are stressed out and over-scheduled. Their Judaism (youth groups, camp, Hebrew school) can easily fall by the wayside as other aspects of their lives become more important. Teens may drop out of Hebrew school after their Bar/Bat Mitzvah because they are entering high school where there will be a heavier workload; older teens may stop participating in youth group as college applications come out and standardized tests need to be taken.

Who participates?

- About 20 percent of Jewish teens are or have participated in a youth group.
- About 23 percent of students in areas of high Jewish population participate in youth groups.
- 60 percent of teens in areas with small Jewish communities participate.
- Teens living in dense Jewish populations are less likely to participate in a youth group because they are surrounded by Jewish teens and Jewish life every day.
- Those in less dense areas need to try harder to seek out Jewish opportunities and friendships.

(Sources: Brandeis, 2000; National Study of Youth and Religion)

Special focus on TWEENS



The age group of “tweens” has sprung up in the last decade as a powerful spending force and as an audience that marketers are trying harder to reach. Because the category of tween is fairly recent, there is still debate about which ages fall into the group; some reports use adolescents 8–12 while others choose 9–14 years. Despite being so close in age, there are significant differences between the way teens and tweens spend their time, allocate their money, and prioritize their life goals.

- 58 percent of tweens prefer to spend time with their parents, while only 31 percent prefer time with friends.
- In 2005, 29 million U.S. tweens had a total purchasing power of \$40 billion.
- Tweens spend their money on food and movie/TV merchandise, such as Disney-related products for live-action hits, such as *Hannah Montana* and *High School Musical*.
- 21 percent of tweens say they have “a lot of stress” in their lives.
- 31 percent of tweens polled reported that their goal was to be famous.

BBYO Strategy: BBYO's Teen Connection for 7th and 8th graders offers fun events like bowling and dances to bring Jewish tweens together.

- Each day, tweens spend:
 - 2 hours watching TV
 - 116 minutes talking to parents
 - 72 minutes listening to music
 - 67 minutes playing video games
 - 51 minutes talking on the phone
 - 36 minutes shopping
 - 33 minutes reading magazines

Similar to their older siblings, tweens share a passion for multi-tasking. They spend their time doing similar activities, such as watching TV and listening to music, but tweens spend much more time with their parents and much less time online. While teens think about the financial future in a more serious way, tweens' desire for the future is to become famous.

(Sources: Washington Post; Youth Intelligence/Nickelodeon Tween Report, 2007; “Time to play, money to spend” by Carleen Hawn, CNNmoney.com, 2005; Trends and Tudes, 5.6, 2006)

Today's teens experience the world differently from previous generations. Having never experienced the world unplugged, the expectations and needs of teens drive their social, consumer and religious interactions. They desire the ability to customize all aspects of their lives in order to construct an identity that fits their needs. Ultimately, teens are looking for ways to connect to and communicate with their peers—be it face-to-face, online or through consumer trends—in an effort to build meaningful relationships.



By keeping track of teen trends, BBYO has positioned itself to better understand the needs of Jewish teens in an effort to develop strategies to appropriately market to, and program for, this unique generation. The data in this report is designed to help individuals and organizations across the Jewish community to better provide for the Jewish teen market. The key is to provide creative and customizable experiences to help teens connect to their Judaism and build their identity.

As you've seen in the "BBYO Strategy" boxes throughout this document, BBYO has used this knowledge to develop successful methods of reaching more Jewish teens with more meaningful Jewish experiences:

- The award-winning website My2CentsforChange.org gave teens of all ages a chance to voice their opinions on topics at stake in the 2008 presidential election, ranging from war and genocide to poverty, hunger and homelessness.
- BBYO's Teen Connection for 7th and 8th graders offers fun events like bowling and dances to bring Jewish tweens together.
- BBYO offers teens a chance to participate in the world around them by giving them opportunities to attend Darfur rallies and AIPAC conferences.
- Customizable summer experiences through the Passport to the World brand allow teens to choose where and when they want to travel with peers.
- By offering a variety of leadership, travel, community service and social justice programming, teens can choose their own BBYO adventure.
- BBYO helps teens navigate the college experience and career choices through campus visits and Project NYC, a 10-day experience for emerging entrepreneurs.

Jewish teens are looking for new and creative ways to connect and express their Judaism. Traditional synagogue services and events will not appeal to all teens to help them discover their own Jewish identity. Not all Jewish teens have a Jewish educational background, and many are not interested in classroom learning by the time they reach high school. Travel programs, unique programming and different ways of expression through art or music allow Jewish teens to find a connection while exploring their personal interests.

Tips for Marketing to Teens

HOW TO MARKET TO EVER-CHANGING ATTITUDES

- Teens demand instant gratification. They won't waste their time with long, drawn-out processes to get what they want.
- Teens do not respond to inconsistency in ad campaigns.
- Marketing must be "cool" without trying too hard to grab their attention.
- They respond well to humor and music in advertisements.
- Teens are smart; they know when you're trying to "get" them.
- Teens like interactive campaigns, websites with games, etc.
- Teens respond well to authentic and original material.
- Parents are still very much involved in the life of their "tween." Include them in your marketing.
- And, finally, allow teens to define involvement and what being Jewish mean—don't try to define it for them.

(Sources: TRU, 2005; NDP Group; Fairchild; Youth Intelligence, TeensEyes 2008)



To learn more about BBYO visit

www.bbyo.org

BBYO's Impact

A BBYO survey released October 2008 reveals that BBYO has a significantly positive impact on classic indicators of Jewish connection—attitudes, behaviors, and relationships—and, in fact, BBYO alumni value Jewish connection at a much higher rate than Jews in the general population do (as measured by the United Jewish Communities National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01).

The BBYO study was conducted by TRU, the global leader in youth research, and a division of Research International, the world's largest custom-research firm.

Significant survey findings include:

- Almost all (92%) alumni respondents said they "regard being Jewish as very important," whereas just more than half (52%) of the general Jewish population* hold that same value.
- Nearly two-thirds (65%) stated that BBYO was "very" or "extremely important" in strengthening their Jewish connection.
- The connection to Israel among BBYO alumni is dramatic. Whereas 63% of the Jewish population at large feel "emotionally attached to Israel," 80% of BBYO alumni do. Furthermore, nearly two-thirds (64%) identified "advocating for Israel" as a critical issue that would likely sway their political vote.
- The vast majority of alumni (79%) are married to a Jewish spouse, and 82% said that it's "extremely" or "very" important to raise their children Jewish.
- Whereas half (52%) of the general Jewish population say half or more of their closest friends are Jewish, that number increases to more than three-fourths (76%) for BBYO alumni.
- Nearly nine in 10 of surveyed alumni (86%) ranked BBYO as one of the top three Jewish experiences that have made a positive impact on their lives. In addition, one-third (34%) ranked BBYO as the one experience most responsible for positively impacting their Jewish lives.

These survey findings reiterate BBYO's desire to connect with as many of today's Jewish teens as possible because we know, and this research confirms, that we will have a stronger Jewish future as a result.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

BBYO commissioned TRU to conduct a comprehensive research project to better understand the impact of BBYO on participant's connectedness to their faith. TRU fielded a study September 2-12, 2008, among a sample of BBYO alumni living in the U.S. and Canada; a total of 1,308 respondents completed the online survey. TRU strived to achieve a mix of respondents across ages (18 and older), gender, and geographic regions. The margin of error is plus or minus 2.7 percentage points in total (at the 95% confidence level).



ABOUT THE RESEARCH FIRM

TRU was founded in 1982 as the first marketing research firm to specialize exclusively in the teenage market. Since that time, TRU has expanded to being the leading researcher of tweens and twenty-somethings as well. Counting among its clients, many of both the largest commercial and social-marketing organizations, from Procter & Gamble to Pepsi, Nike to Nordstrom, and the White House Office of Drug-Control Policy Youth Campaign to the Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, TRU is a full-service firm, providing syndicated, qualitative and quantitative research to its clients. Headquartered in Chicago, TRU is a division of Research International, with offices in more than 50 countries. TRU's staff includes research and marketing professionals with advertising agency, brand management, consulting and social research backgrounds.

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ABOUT BBYO

BBYO is the leading pluralistic teen movement aspiring to involve more Jewish teens in more meaningful Jewish experiences. For more than 80 years, BBYO has provided exceptional identity enrichment and leadership development experiences for hundreds of thousands of Jewish teens. In 60 communities across North America, Jewish teens connect with one another, volunteer in the community, celebrate their Jewish heritage, prepare for leadership roles in the community, and travel the world together, all within a Jewish context. Together, they form lifelong friendships, meaningful connections to Jewish life, and a shared commitment to strengthening the Jewish future. BBYO's 250,000 alumni are among the most prominent figures in business, politics, academia, the arts, and Jewish communal life.

BBYO's proven leadership model of experiential democracy, with teens leading other teens and creating their own BBYO programs under the guidance of adult volunteers and staff, is carried out through more than 500 AZA chapters (for young men) and BBG chapters (for young women) throughout North America. Starting in 2002, when it became independent from B'nai B'rith, BBYO re-invented and expanded its approach to teen engagement to include opportunities outside of its traditional chapter-based membership model. Through this marriage of tradition and innovation, BBYO increased the number of teens involved in its programs from 13,000 (a low point in the organization's history) to approximately 26,000 currently. In doing so, BBYO has been able to more effectively carry out its mission - "involving more Jewish teens in more meaningful Jewish experiences."

For more information on BBYO, please visit www.bbyo.org.

